LOK SABHA

Thursday, April 9, 1992/Chaitra 20, 1914 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN (Rosera): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to point out that we are holding Nyay Jyoti Yatra and as such not coming to attend the House. We have come here only to draw the attention of the Government towards one thing. The hon. Home Minister, Shankaranandji and Shri Kesariji are present here. The Government has done an excellent job by declaring 14th April, the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar as a public holiday but at the same time this has not been declared as a public holiday in public sector and public sector undertakings etc. and the U.P.S.C. examinations would be conducted on that day as scheduled. In the light of this we would urge the Government that this holiday becomes meaningless if a discriminatory attitude is adopted.

We would urge the Government to declare Baba Saheb Ambedkar's birthday as a holiday for all sectors. There is consensus in the entire House on this point. (*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S.B. CHAVAN): We will try to cover Public Sector and Public Sector Undertakings under Negotiable Instruments Act.

11.01 hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*English*]

Relief to Drought Affected States

\+

*613. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE:
SHRI V. KRISHNA RAO:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the States/Union Territories at present affected by drought;

(b) the estimated loss caused thereby to crops and livestock in each affected State/Union Territory; and

(c) the Central assistance sought by each such State/Union Territory and the amount actually released so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (c). A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT

Drought conditions in some parts of the States of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Rajasthan have been reported by the State Governments.

According to these reports, the crop area to the extent of 8.12 lakh hec. (Rabi) in Karnataka, 25.00 lakh hec. (more than 50%) in Madhya Pradesh, 58.60 lakh hec. (more than 50%) in Maharashtra and 77.99 lakh hec. in Rajasthan have been affected. The Government of Gujarat has reported an estimated loss of 10.42 lakh M.T. in the production of kharif foodgrains, 11.71 lakh M.T. kharif oilseeds and 7.37 lakh M.T. in cotton. No loss of livestock has been reported.

The State Governments o Karnataka, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra have submitted memoranda seeking additional Central assistance to the tune of Rs. 50.00 crores, Rs. 650.00 crores, Rs. 220.00 crores and Rs. 789.41 crores respectively for relief measures.

Under the existing scheme of financing relief expenditure, the State Governments are required to undertake relief measures in the wake of natural calamities, using the corpus of the Calamity Relief Fund. The Central Government need provide additional assistance only in the case of calamities of 'rare severity' warranting handling at the national level. The requests from the above State Governments for additional Central assistance in the wake of drought conditions have been considered in the light of the existing scheme for financing relief expenditure and the gravity of the drought situation. It has been decided to depute Central teams to the States of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh to assess the situation. A Central team is presently in Madhya Pradesh and the Team for Gujarat will leave shortly. The quantum of Central assistance if any required to be provided to these States will be decided on receipt of the report of the Central Team. It has also been decided that no additional Central assistance is required to be provided to the States of Maharashtra and Karnataka.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Sir, Rajasthan drought is something that we all have to live with. However, I want to ask the Government – knowing that the situation in Rajasthan is very very bad at the moment – why the wheat allocation in January, 1991 to Rajasthan was 1 lakh tonnes per month; in November 1991, this was reduced to 67 thousand tonnes and is currently 75 thousand per month? This works out to a measly per capita consumption of 1.7 kg per month per head to Delhi's ten kgs per month per head. Does the Government intend to increase these allocations to the level at least comparable with Delhi immediately in view of the prevailing drought conditions?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): Sir, will you request the hon. Member to refer this question to the Food and Civil Supplies Minister.(*Interruptions*).

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: This is ridiculous. (*Interruptions*).

[*Translation*]

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Please allow me to speak for a minute. Hon. Balram Jakhar is aware and it need not to be explained to him that due to failure of rains in Western Rajasthan Bajra did not grow and rice is not the staple food for people of this region and you have curtailed the supply of wheat. You give 10 kilo wheat per person to Delhi whereas Rajasthan is given only one Kilo and when the hon. Member has raised this issue you are asking him to refer this question to some other Ministry.(*Interruptions*).

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Ministry concerned with this question is in a better position to answer this question.(*Interruptions*).

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: You may give even an unsatisfactory reply.(*Interruptions*).

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: The Ministry which is concerned with it, may answer it. It is not dealt by me.(*Interruptions*).

[*English*]

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: I am very sorry. It is very ridiculous.(*Interruptions*).

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: I am always prepared to do it. I do not shirk from my responsibility at all.(*Interruptions*).

[*Translation*]

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: I would not like that the procurement done by us.....(*Interruptions*) The Ministry which is concerned with this will deal with this subject and my intervention will not be proper. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAM NAIK: You can at least console them and express your sympathy.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: I have full sympathy with you but how can I do a wrong thing? How can I commit that I shall do their work?

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: You have done a wrong thing by curtailing the supply of wheat.(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: Are you aware of the functioning of the Ministries? If you ask me questions about my Ministry, I am prepared to answer instantly. You ask me questions pertaining to my Ministry and I shall reply within no time.(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please speak one by one, kindly be seated. Let the hon. Lady Member ask her question.

[*English*]

She is quite capable of dealing with it.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please, not like this. You take your seats. Let her deal with it.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Sir, I just want to know from the Minister that does it mean that he is declining to answer this question completely. The question is about drought relief in Rajasthan and I asked him that considering that he is also from Rajasthan and he knows the severity of the drought conditions in Rajasthan, does he really feel that it was worthwhile cutting the wheat which is going to Rajasthan, considering that the *bajra* crop is completely failed and we are not rice eaters. He says that his Ministry is not competent to deal with it.

MR. SPEAKER: I will try to help you. You know that unfortunately this question can be divided in two parts. One part relates to the Agriculture Ministry, the other part relates to the Food and Civil Supplies Ministry. Probably the hon. Minister is not having enough information to give reply to your question on supply of food to the State. As far as the agriculture part of your question is concerned, he is willing to answer.....

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Not like this.

[*Translation*]

Not like this, please resume your seat.

[*English*]

Let her speak. Now, part (c) relates to Food and Civil Supplies, parts (a) and (b) relate to Agriculture.

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Joshiji, please resume your seat and allow the hon. Lady Member to speak.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as far as drought relief is concerned I am ready with every information in this regard but as regards allocation of foodgrains like rice, wheat and sugar etc., it is done by the

Food and Civil Supplies Ministry. As such, if I reply to it, it will be termed as an under interference. You please ask me questions regarding drought relief and I have no objection in replying to those.(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: All of you please be seated and stop interrupting. Let the hon. Member ask her question. If you want you can ask supplementaries later. Please don't stand and cause disturbance.

(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, there are two parts of this question. If you have the information about the Civil Supplies also, we will appreciate if you give it. If you do not have the information, I will not insist on that.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: Sir, there is no question of that information being with me.

MR. SPEAKER: The Government is jointly responsible to the House and the people.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: That is right, Sir, but I am supposed to know what is in my jurisdiction.

MR. SPEAKER: If you o not have the information, we will not insist.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: But Sir, that does not mean that I have the information of the other Ministry. That Ministry must consider their job and I must consider my job.

MR.SPEAKER: Anyway, you ask the question. Now you understand the intricacy involved in it, if not the delicacy. The agriculture part you can ask.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: Sir, he says that part (c) does not belong to his Ministry. But he has given the answer for part (c) also.

MR. SPEAKER: You please take your set. You are going beyond your limit. This is not a question-answer session between you and me.....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat now.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: I just want a clarification whether part (c) really belongs to him because he has given the answer to pat (c).

MR. SPEAKER: He might have collected the information and given the answer.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: He has given the answer.

MR. SPEAKER: Now this is little too much, Mr. Nirmal Knatiji. I am trying to help the Member and you are trying to complicate the issue. You do not have to do that.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: I am not doing that.

MR. SPEAKER: If you want to ask a question using your ingenuity, I will allow you to ask your supplementary. You always do like this. This is not correct.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: I never do like this.....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: O.K., it is a good promise. Anyway, you ask your question.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Sir, in this case it is very obvious that the Minister is not interested in answering the question. So, I will not press that point. I hate to feel that the Government would divide something like drought relief, into this Ministry and that Ministry and refuse to make it a collective answer, like they could have done. *However, it is unfortunate for us in Rajasthan, that is probably the reason why we are suffering for the last 40 years under the Government that Mr. Jakhar belongs to.*

In the current year also the Ninth Finance Commission certain allocations are being made to the Government of Rajasthan and also I believe they are very measly considering that we have been going through drought for a period of over 26 years out of 36 years Rs. 124 crores is a very small amount. In 1988–89 alone the Government spent Rs. 900 crores. What I want to know from the hon. Minister is that he does intend to set this inadequacy right immediately by increasing the drought relief to more realistic levels for the State, and secondly, is the Government thinking of according Rajasthan a special status in view of these very unusual circumstances?

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is not decided by my Department because it is the Finance Commission....

MR. SPEAKER: You will send through the supply Ministry, they will look into it.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: It is the Finance Commission which was appointed and they went into the whole gamut of calamity relief and in full consideration and consultation with the States it was decided that a certain portion, three-fourths, by the Central Government and one-fourth by the State was to be provide for each State each year in quarterly disbursements and that was of Rs. 84 crores. That was decided after complete consideration by all the parties concerned and taking into account 10 years' average, and that is why Rajasthan got Rs. 124 crores, and I have got the statistics here to show that this year Rajasthan had about Rs. 200 crores plus which was unspent from the last year and Rs. 124 crores of this year.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: It seems that the Minister is upset that there was no drought last year and therefore, Rs. 200 crores were left unspent.

MR. SPEAKER: You will have the chance of asking the second supplementary.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: I can provide a list which has been provided by the State Government and this is what it is with me and I can hand over this also to you. There is no problem with that, but it has to be decided by another Finance Commission, how much is to be given and how much is not be given.(*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: I have asked a very very pointed question.

MR.SPEAKER: Is this your first supplementary or second supplementary?

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: I am asking him from this Supplementary.(*Interruptions*). I am just asking the Minister, Sir, whether his Ministry is going to recommend, since it is a fact that Rajasthan is reeling under this drought, does his Ministry intend to rectify the problem that we are facing at this moment? If he could tell me the terms of reference under which his Ministry operates, then we can ask the question, Sir. But every time he gets up and says, 'It is not concerning me, it concerns the Finance Commission, it concerns the Food and Civil Supplies Ministry'.' If he could just tell me what the terms of reference are, I will ask him the question accordingly.

MR. SPEAKER: You are also expected to know which Ministry deals with the drought.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Under drought.....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: She is also expected to know, you need not explain to her.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: I am surprised that he wants to deal.....*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: She is trying to understand whether you would help Rajasthan by forwarding it to the concerned Ministry.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Are you trying to do it?

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: Sir, there is the question of a severe calamity and there is always a way out and for that certain times a team is sent to ascertain the damage caused by a drought and if that comes under the purview of the severe calamity, then there could be a separate allocation for that. But that has not been so decided, we can send a team. We have sent one to Gujarat and one to another State and the Report will be coming and we can send the same to Rajasthan also. (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: .....sent a team to Madhya Pradesh and to Karnataka.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: That only can be decided later on at the national level, how far is the severity of that drought, that is all.

MR. SPEAKER: Second Supplementary now. He has replied saying that he will send a team to Rajasthan and try to find out if something more is required.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Thank you, Sir, for having clarified it because I really would not have been able to make out. But I asked another question to which he has not been able to reply as yet. Considering the special status and peculiar circumstances of Rajasthan , are you going to recommend to the Government perhaps, you also belong to Rajasthan, that would perhaps be a very good idea to accord special status. In view of the calamity that we are facing every year and in view of the failure of the crop that we are facing every year, are you going to accord any special status to Rajasthan?

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: We have always done like that. In 1987 and 1988, we had provided Rs. 900 crores to Rajasthan. But, this is a special case here and if the team which goes there to ascertain the things recommends that it is a severe drought, then I can put it to the Cabinet and then it can be done. I am not prone to any other extraneous circumstance. The whole of India belongs to me and I belong to that.

[Translation]

SHRI AYUB KHAN: Sir, as you know that the hon. Agriculture Minister hails from Rajasthan and he is well acquainted with that State.....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: All right. You can ask now.

SHRI AYUB KAHN: Sir, as you know that the hon. Agriculture Minister hails from Rajasthan and the Lady Member speaking before me had made allegations against the Congress Government. I would like to point out that Rajasthan is in the grip of a devastating drought and 80 per cent of the State has been affected by it. Due to scarcity of fodder Rajasthan is facing a critical situation. The present Government of Rajasthan has not succeeded in initiating any new programme in any of the districts of Rajasthan.*(Interruptions)* I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government would give powers to Rajasthan Government to give assistance for fodder for cattles or not. Rs. 134 crores have been allocated for undertaking drought relief measures. In this context, is there any proposal to send an special investigation team to assess requirement of enhanced the funds or not?

MR. SPEAKER: You have replied to this before.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: Sir, I only want to say that the hon. Member has rightly pointed out that Rajasthan has Rs. 202 crores of the previous year and Rs. 124 crores of this year. If need be I can release one more instalment this year. For this it is essential on the part of State Government to take some steps. In this connection, I have not received any representation from the Rajasthan Government so far.

[English]

SHRI MUMTAZ ANSARI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, from the statement made by the hon. Minister, it appears as if no report has been

sent by Bihar to the Central Government for relief and central assistance, but it is a fact that most parts of Bihar have been badly and adversely affected by drought and severe losses have been incurred by the State of Bihar. So, I would like to know whether some steps will be taken by the Central Government if any report is submitted by the State-ment Government now and how much central assistance will be released by the hon. Minister in this regard. The southern part of Bihar is adversely affected by drought. So, I would also like to know whether the Central Government is contemplating to undertake its own just measurement and survey about the extent of losses which have been caused by the drought to the State.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: Sir, it is a hypothetical question and what will be in the future, I cannot predict.

Gas for Gas-based Power Stations

\+

*614. SHRIMATI DIPIKA H. TOPIWALA:
SHRI DILEEPBHAI SANGHANI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the daily requirement of gas for gas-based power stations in Gujarat;

(b) whether the gas is being supplied to these stations according to their requirement;

(c) if not, the reason therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to meet their requirement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR): (a) to (b). The total commitment of gas for gas based power stations in Gujarat is

		(MMSCMD)
1. GEB, Dhuvaran	–	0.42
2. GEB, Utaran	–	0.70
3. AEC, Vatwa	–	0.40
4. GIPCO	–	0.70
5. NTPC, Kawas	–	2.25
6. NTPC, Gandhar	–	1.50
7. GEB, Gandhar	–	1.50

Some of these projects are yet to be established. Approximately 1.6 MMSCMD of gas is being supplied at present. One of the constraints in meeting the full present requirement is the current availability of gas.

ONGC is expediting the drilling of wells, laying of pipelines, etc. to enhance the availability of gas in order to meet the requirements as per commitment.

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seats. Probably you are all aware that today and yesterday we are all on 'Agriculture'. You can discuss this issue. You can ask not only one question; but you can make a speech of 10 or 15 minutes.

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. What is this going on. Why this is not being taken seriously? You are not allowed to do whatever you like. I have already told you that you can discuss the issue at the time of discussion on the Demands on agriculture. It is not the correct way of discussion.

SHRI DATTA MEGHE: It has been written in the reply that no production is undertaken in Maharashtra.(*Interruptions*) *

*Not recorded.